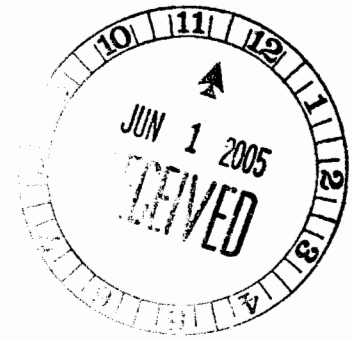802 Sierra Lane NE
Rochester, MN 55906

May 27, 2005

Case Control Unit
Finance Docket No. 33407
Surface Transportation Board
1925 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

Dear Sirs:

Here are my comments on your decisions relating to the four remanded issues concerning the DM&E coal train expansion:

Horn noise- Yes, it would be very costly to mitigate the horn noise. In fact, it would cost $4.5m to insulate the 1,100 homes and 200 businesses in Rochester that would be affected, but the drop in value of these properties without insulation will be $7.6m. This is unacceptable. By the way, your study is based on the 1990 census and out-of-date.

Noise and Vibration Synergies- I leave it to the Mayo Clinic to predict the effect of the coal trains on the MRI machines. The Clinic staff are the most informed people on this issue. Plus, there is a new Clinic building, four blocks from the tracks, another synergy target.

Air quality- It's nice that national air quality will not be significantly diminished by the additional coal burned due to the DM&E expansion, but irrelevant to the people living downwind of the coal-burning energy plants. If you don't have specific information on where the additional coal would be burned, then you don't have enough information to talk about regional air quality. The air quality in Rochester will certainly be diminished, due to coal particulate matter blowing off the train cars, and fumes from the train engines.

Programmatic Agreement Governing Historic Review- If this includes environmental justice, then please reconsider your decisions regarding the discriminatory effect of the train affecting the lower income people living nearer the tracks. Your analysis failed to use the methods that you invoked for the Houston case in 2003, which would have helped the City of Rochester in its case.

I trust that others will make the arguments I have missed, and that you will look at the whole picture instead of just the remanded issues.

Sincerely,

Emily Myers
Emily Myers